



Mission Statement

The Inclusion Council exists to support Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois in becoming a welcoming, inclusive, diverse and equitable (WIDE) organization.

Means:

The Inclusion Council:

1. Creates a supportive environment within which opportunities for LCFS to become more welcoming, inclusive, diverse and equitable can be effectively addressed.
2. Promotes an organizational environment in which we are a community that supports diversity in its many dimensions.
3. Promotes equity in our work with populations that have historically been disproportionately represented and that have had less than optimal outcomes in the services we provide.
4. Participates in and encourages learning opportunities that facilitate growth in WIDE domains.
5. Provides leadership in the implementation of practices that have been identified as instrumental in bringing about change.
6. Promotes an organizational environment within which the full spectrum of human diversity is regularly included in conversations about the work we do.
7. Tracks data that reflects how our organization is performing in WIDE domains and uses that data to inform improvement strategies.
8. Provides advocacy that values and empowers all people.

Membership:

Statewide council:

Council membership should include representation from a range of geographical areas and functions of the organization. A maximum of 18 council members is desired. Corporate representation is expected.



Representation:

Council representation should mirror our agency's constituency and staffing whenever possible.

Qualifications:

- Council members are required to have participated in a Crossroads 2 ½ day analysis and to have a foundation in the analysis of systemic oppression. Council members are required to have completed All Children All Families' webinar series including the [Core Curriculum](#), [Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Parents](#) and [Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Youth](#).

Active member: Regular involvement of all members is crucial. An active member is a representative who attends meetings with regularity (attending at least 75% of scheduled meetings in a year), and who is engaged and participates in discussion during meetings as well as completing follow up commitments. Participation levels will be reviewed regularly and members will be supported to maintain their commitment.

Meeting frequency:

Meetings take place every other month. While teleconferencing may occasionally be utilized, it is important that these meetings be established at a centralized location so that the group can meet face-to-face.

Minimum commitment:

Members are expected to make a full year commitment to participation in the Council in order to ensure continuity and progress.

Team and Member Qualities:

❖ ***Personal responsibility:***

Each Council member should carry a commitment to continued growth in cultural sensitivity and to dismantling systemic oppression/racism in their work with the council and their broader work activities.

❖ ***Communication and Collaboration:***

As the Council confronts issues which challenge our entire society, it is essential that the team support and trust one another as they share in this process. The Council will make regular efforts to create opportunities to nurture components of team identity and trust. The Council should be a forum in which to continually reflect on issues of trust and support.



- ❖ *Efficient application of resources:*
Team members should have complementary skills and the time devoted to this project should be used wisely.
- ❖ *A commitment to impact:*
Council members are committed to making a difference as we promote Agency growth in becoming WIDE.
- ❖ *Confidentiality*
The Inclusion Council needs to be both a courageous environment for discussing sensitive issues and a place that can be part of an ongoing, dynamic Agency dialogue on issues relating to inclusion. As such, participants need to be circumspect about sharing the specifics of discussions, while maintaining a responsibility to continually engage broader areas of the Agency in the themes related to Council activities.

Activities:

Training

- All members of the Inclusion Council are required to participate in the Crossroads 2 ½ day analysis workshop; Council members are also required to have completed All Children All Families' webinar series including the [Core Curriculum](#), [Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Parents](#) and [Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Youth](#).

The Agency provides orientation and ongoing training for all staff members in areas related to inclusion. The HR and training departments assume primary responsibility for organizing and conducting these events, but the Inclusion Council should play an active role in prioritizing these trainings, providing consultation regarding content, serving as a clearinghouse for resources and fully participating. It is expected that a member of the HR department be on the Inclusion Council.

Caucusing

The Council's work requires a climate of openness and trust. An ongoing part of Council activities will be that members devote time to discussing among themselves their personal experiences related to privilege, cultural competence, inclusion and systemic oppression/racism. If organizational issues surface in caucusing, these need to be included in the Council's ongoing analysis activities.



Analysis and Recommendations

A central task of the Inclusion Council is to conduct an ongoing analysis of the Agency's functioning to identify systemic areas of strength and challenges as they relate to inclusion issues. From this analysis should emerge recommendations, advocacy and action concerning how the Agency might be involved in to grow in these areas. The Council should encourage systemic self-reflection on issues related to inclusion and actively promote systemic change. To whatever extent possible, Council members will utilize the existing Agency communication structures to influence Agency practice. Corporate Officers will receive regular reports from the Inclusion Council and reports from the Inclusion Council will be submitted to the Statewide Quality Council. Additional forums include peer review, quality councils, all-staff meetings and supervisors' meetings.

Change Agents

Members of the Inclusion Council are committed to being change agents that further Council's mission of supporting LCFS in becoming WIDE. Planning, reflection and study are important in developing an effective understanding of the complex array of barriers to becoming WIDE, but ultimately we recognize the importance of acting to bring about significant change.